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HALF-LIFE (MORE OR LESS)

Physicists are stirred by claims that the sun may change what's unchangeable—the rate of radioactive decay

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THE SOURCE

ENLARGE Physicists have responded with curiosity and skepticism to reports that the sun causes variations in the decay rates of some isotopes.

The Purdue scientists are planning more experiments. In the end, the burden of proof will be on them, Cooper says. "Every experimentalist knows that the apparatus, or at least your understanding of it, is always at fault until demonstrated otherwise," he says. It's likely that seasonal weather caused the anomalies, he says, but admits that future work could prove him wrong. "Nature is really unmoved by what I, or anyone else, believes."